47

UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.157/ASRM/3
16 March 1993

Original: ENGLISH

WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Regional Meeting for Asia
Bangkok, 29 March-2 April 1993
Item 6 of the provisional agenda

CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES RELATING TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO THE REGION: A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Note by the Secretariat

Second Asia-Pacific Workshop on Human Rights Issues, Jakarta, 26-28 January 1993

The attention of the Regional Meeting for Asia is drawn to the draft report */ of the Second Asia-Pacific Workshop on Human Rights Issues, held in Jakarta from 26 to 28 January 1993.

---

*/ The attached unedited draft (English version only) is made available at this stage to facilitate the deliberations of the Regional Meeting. The final edited version will be circulated in due course.

GE.93-12274

Annex

UNITED NATIONS

CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

DRAFT REPORT

(Unedited version)

SECOND REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR THE ASIA-PACIFIC ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

JAKARTA, INDONESIA
26-28 JANUARY 1993

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Chairman's Concluding Remarks	3
Workshop Backgound	5
Opening Ceremony	5
Workshop Topic One: International Norms and Standards in the Field of Human Rights	6
Workshop Topic Two: National Implementation of International Human Rights Standards	7
Workshop Topic Three: National Institutions for Protection and Promotion of Human Rights	8
Workshop Topic Four: On the Possibility of Promoting Regional Human Rights Arrangements / Promoting Intra-regional and interregional Cooperation	10
Workshop Topic Five: The World Conference on Human Rights	12
Closing Session:	14
Annexes	15

ASIA-PACIFIC WORKSHOP ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES
JAKARTA, INDONESIA
26-28 JANUARY 1993

CHAIRMAN'S CONCLUDING REMARKS

For the past three days this Asia-Pacific Workshop has been engaged in a frank discussion and exchange of views on a number of important human rights issues emerging from our respective national experiences. The Asia-Pacific region is one of rich political, economic, social and cultural diversity. It is both natural and appropriate, therefore, that our discussions reflect this diversity. While there were different nuances in the views expressed, it is apparent that we have reached broad understanding on several important principles relating to the subjects discussed.

While human rights principles are universal and standards have been negotiated and accepted at the international level, responsibility for the implementation of these norms primarily rests at the state level. Nevertheless it must be recognized that procedures and machinery for implementation will vary from state to state.

The United Nations Charter was, in many ways, the very first international human rights agreement. It is interesting and instructive to note that human rights are dealt with in the Charter under the heading of "International Cooperation". Accordingly, the promotion and protection of human rights should be pursued in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect and in a non-confrontation way.

In accordance with the important principle of indivisibility, human rights issues should be approached in an objective and balanced fashion. Commitment to the principle of indivisibility will promote international cooperation and avoid unproductive confrontation. In the same way, both the individual and the collective aspects of human rights must be considered concurrently and in a balanced manner.

The international system which has been developed to monitor implementation of human rights instruments should approach its task in a creative, constructive way by focusing on both positive and negative aspects of states' human rights performance and by according equal importance to civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights.

In addition, member States and the United Nations human rights machinery should cooperate to give full effect to those provisions of international human rights instruments providing for technical advice and assistance if a State Party requests it.

National human rights institutions have an important role to play in protecting against human rights violations as well as developing promotional and educational activities (such as educational programmes for the general public and training programmes for law enforcement personnel, both civilian and military, and government officials) aimed at ensuring that human rights are enjoyed by everyone. National institutions should be considered in the context of the developmental process of a country. Within this context, countries wishing to create such institutions should be able to benefit from the United Nations' programme of advisory services and technical assistance in the field of human rights.

Matters which should be taken into account in establishing regional mechanisms in Asia and the Pacific include the geographical complexity, diversity and vastness of the countries which form the region as well as their different historical background and levels of political stability, economic prosperity and social development. Progress has already been made at a sub-regional level among a number of countries and national institutions. Within this context a number of protective and promotional activities are under way in ASEAN regarding vulnerable groups such as women and children and the relationship between development and human rights. Discussions at regional meetings are a valuable forum to enable governments and national institutions to exchange experiences and strengthen support for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The Second Asia-Pacific Workshop has been positive and constructive in promoting better and deeper understanding among the countries of the region. This example should be built on by other conferences and consultations, including workshops, in the Asia-Pacific region and other regions of the world. A step by step strategy should be adopted in establishing regional machinery for the promotion and protection of human rights. A first step could be the setting up of sub-regional machinery for human rights information dissemination. This could be followed, for example, by the establishing of an Asia Forum which could enhance regional exchange of ideas and experiences aimed at promoting human rights activities. The Forum could be used in order to design at a later stage machinery at sub-regional or regional level for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The World Conference on Human Rights to be held later this year represents a valuable opportunity to focus attention and efforts on important human rights issues including those matters which have been considered by this workshop. If the World Conference is to produce tangible results it will be important that increased resources be provided to the United Nations Centre for Human Rights to ensure that the provision of advisory services and technical assistance, particularly to developing countries which request it, can be provided.

Jakarta, 28 January 1993

WORKSHOP BACKGROUND

In its resolution 1992/40 of 28 February 1992, the Commission on Human Rights, recalling that a seminar on regional arrangements for protection and promotion of human rights was to be have been held in Indonesia in late 1991, requested the Secretary-General, to organise, once again, a seminar to discuss this matter in 1992.

In accordance with this resolution, the Second Asia-Pacific Workshop on Human Rights Issues was organised by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Indonesia under the Centre's programme of Advisory Services and Technical Assistance in the Field of Human Rights.

The central objectives of the workshop were as follows:

(i) to increase awareness among countries of the region of international human rights standards and procedures and of the role of States in implementing human rights norms.

(ii) to inform participants of the mechanisms which are available to assist States in fulfilling their obligations under the various international human rights instruments.

(iii) to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of human rights between countries of the region.

(iv) to foster the development of national human rights institutions in the region

(v) to provide a forum for discussion of questions relating to the establishment of regional arrangements for protection and promotion of human rights.

(vi) to facilitate dialogue between Asia-Pacific nations on the upcoming World Conference on Human Rights

Additional information on specific objectives may be found in the body of the following report.

OPENING CEREMONY

The Second Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Human Rights Issues was officially opened by His Excellency, Mr Soeharto, President of the Republic of Indonesia at a ceremony conducted at the State Palace, Jakarta, on the morning of Tuesday, 26 January 1992.

In his opening address the President expressed the hope that the workshop would serve as an effective forum of discussion to foster an understanding of basic human rights in the Asia-Pacific as well as in the respective countries which comprise this region. The President commented that differences

in living standards have a great effect on national human rights policies and that for this reason, individual countries must, by necessity, take their own steps towards the realisation of human rights for their citizens. He then went on to explain the Indonesian concept of human rights as set forth in its constitution of 1945.

The Indonesian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Ali Alatas also addressed the gathering as did Mr Antoine Blanca, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights. Mr Blanca's speech, which focused on the work of the United Nations in the field of human rights as well as the major themes of the Workshop, is reproduced as an annex to this report.

****

Note: The Workshop was chaired jointly by Mr Blanca, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, and Mr Wiryono, Director General of Political Affairs of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

****

WORKSHOP TOPIC ONE:
INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND STANDARDS IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Objective:

The objective of the first working session was to provide an introductory overview of international human rights norms and standards and, by so doing, to lay the groundwork for future consideration of more specific topics in the field of human rights.

Presentations:

The topic was introduced by **Professor Pocar** who gave a short presentation on the development of international human rights machinery which exists to oversee the implementation of the various human rights standards promulgated by or through the United Nations system. Professor Pocar focussed on some of the problems of implementations by drawing on examples from the Human Rights Committee of which he is currently Chairman. This general overview was supplemented by **Mr Agha Shahi**; former Chairman of the Committee on the Elimination of Racism (CERD), who spoke of his work with the Committee within the broader context of United Nations activities in the field of human rights. Mr Shahi drew the audience's attention to the growing problem of racial and ethnic hatred and the resulting need to strengthen United Nations machinery for dealing with these problems.

Discussion:

Several representatives addressed the panel on the issue of universality of human rights norms which had been raised by Professor Pocar. The discussion centred on reconciling concepts of universality with the reality of regional variations and cultural specificities. It was pointed out that international human rights standards as set out in the Universal Declaration are universally applicable. The question was raised as to whether the implementation of these standards could be subject to regional or national variations.

Other subjects discussed by participants and members of the panel included the concept of collective rights and the question of which individual rights have a collective dimension; the indivisibility of all human rights; the problem of ratifications and how universal ratification of the major instruments could or should be encouraged; in particular, amongst States of the Asia-Pacific region which has the lowest rate of participation in UN human rights instruments. It was agreed that universal respect for human rights could best be achieved through mutual cooperation and assistance. Constructive dialogue in this regard can most usefully be facilitated through the process of ratification.

WORKSHOP TOPIC TWO: NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS

Objective:

The issue of national implementation of international human rights standards is inextricably linked with several major themes of the workshop. The objective of topic two was therefore to examine and discusss the general aspects of this topic before turning to the more specific subjects of institutions and other arrangements.

Presentations:

Mr Blanca, in his capacity as co-moderator, opened the session with the important observation that international machinery, no matter how efficient, cannot, of itself guarantee respect for, amd protection of basic human rights. The international implementation process must be complemented by national application of those human rights standards which have been agreed upon by the world community. He pointed out that without a genuine commitment on the part of individual governments, these international standards can never become a reality for those people they are designed to protect. This theme was further developed by **Professor Pocar** who explained that effective implementation means much more than legislating against interference with the exercise of human rights. States

must also act positively by ensuring this freedom to exercise rights through the creation of favourable conditions for their full enjoyment. This necessarily involves the provision of accessible domestic remedies to redress violations if and when they occur.

The topic of national implementation was explored by **Mr Shahi** within the specific context of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee set up under that treaty. In his presentaion, Mr Shahi raised the problem of massive violations of human rights and the inability of existing United Nations machinery to deal with violations on this scale. He urged all present to view the upcomong World conference as an opportunity to remedy these inadequacies.

The final presentation on this topic was delivered by **Mr Wirajuda** who stressed the importance of adopting a more balanced approach to implentation, one which addresses the positive aspects of a particular states human rights record as well as its failings. In this way, obstacles to the effective implentation of human rights can be identified in a constructive, non-confrontational manner. The imposition of sanctions and conditionalities as a response to violations may well be less effective than assisting in the creation of human rights infrastructures and thereby in the development of a Climate conducive to effective implementation.

Discussion:

Much of the discussion on this topic focussed on the difficulties of implementing international standards and the need for assistance in this regard. Several participants referred to the programme of advisory services and technical assistance conducted by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights. It was generally agreed that the positive, constructive process of preventing violations through promotion and education deserved equal attention to that accorded the often negative protection process.

WORKSHOP TOPIC THREE: NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Objective:

Issues concerning the establishment and development of national human rights institutions formed one of the central themes of the Workshop as part of a broader consideration of the role of states in the implementation of international human rights standards. While national institutions for protection and promotion of human rights remain scarce in the Asia-Pacific region there are currently a number of States which have or are in the process of setting up such institutions. It was hoped that the presentations and

discussions would provide a useful opportunity for the participants to explore this avenue carefully.

Presentations:

The panel for discussion of national institutions was composed of **Mr Burdekin**, Human Rights Commissioner of Australia; **Mr Monteiro**, Human Rights Commissioner of the Philippines, and **Ms Mulgan**, Human Rights Commissioner of New Zealand. Each presenter gave an overview of the structure and functioning of the institution in hes or his country including the legal basis for its creation and a history of its development. Presenters then examined specific issues relating to the subject of national institutions from the perspective of their own national experiences.

The topic was considered over three sessions. The first of these was of an introductory nature in which the basic issues of jurisdiction and competence were examined. Session two was devoted to a discussion of the relations between national institutions, the State and other partners including non-governmental organisations active in the field of human rights. Issues of autonomy and independence were also raised in this context. The final session was in the form of a roundtable discussion of the ways in which a national institution could become an effective instrument in protecting and promoting human rights at the domestic level.

Discussion:

A number of delegations, including those of India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand informed the gathering of steps being taken in their respective countries towards the establishment of national human rights machinery. Other delegations used the discussion period to explain the various means by which their legal and/or administrative systems operate to protect human rights.

Participants took up a number of themes which had been raised by the experts during their presentations. The issue of independence and autonomy was discussed at some length with a number of participants expressing their view on how the impartiality of national institutions can best be secured. Suggestions included fixed terms of appointment for officers, an independent appointment procedure and guaranteed financial resources. The composition of the national institution was also agreed to be vital to ensuring its autonomy and credibility; a broadly based membership is the best way of obtaining widespread community support for the work of the institution.

The question of relations between national institutions, the state and other partners was also discussed at some length. There was general agreement that the support and assistance of

non-governmental human rights organisations is vital as is an open, constructive relationship with other governmental bodies.

With regard to the structure of national institutions, all participating delegations agreed that an individual country's own situation should be considered and that no one model would be universally suitable.

There was also widespread acknowledgement of the important role which national institutions are able to play in the promotion of human rights. A number of delagations ventured the opinion that this educative/promotionary role should be emphasised as it may well be the best or only way human rights can be effectively protected. The importance of cooperation rather than confrontation was also raised in this context.

WORKSHOP TOPIC 4: ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY / PROMOTING INTER-REGIONAL AND INTRA-REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

Objective:

Asia-Pacific is the only United Nations-defined region without a specific human rights treaty and without some form of region-wide mechanism directed towards the protection and promotion of human rights. The absence of such a regional arrangement has been raised in a number of UN fora, particularly in the General Assembly (resolutions 41/153, 43/140, 45/168 and 47/125) and the Commission on Human Rights (resolutions 1988/73, 1989/50, 1990/71, 1991/28 and 1992/40).

In his opening address, the Under-Secretary-General emphasised that both national and international human rights mechanisms stand to benefit from the collaboration and support which can be provided by regional infrastructures. Inclusion of this topic in the agenda of the workshop provided the opportunity for participants to identify ways in which obstacles to the establishment of a regional system for protection and promotion of human rights could be overcome.

The theme of intra-regional cooperation in the field of human rights was explored over two sessions. The first of these focussed on the possibility of establishing regional machinery including consideration of the problems and prospectas associated with such an initiative. The second session took a broader view of intra-regional cooperation in the field of human rights by incorporating discussion of other avenues including bilateral exchange of information and practical assistance.

Presentations:

Both presenters, **Ambassador Fan** and **Mr Lubis** cautioned against ambitious plans to establish regional human rights machinery. Asia-Pacific is not a homogenous area with respect to history, culture, language or political orientation. Models of existing regional arrangements are therefore, because of this lack of any unifying tradition, only of limited usefulness.

Any efforts in this respect should therefore be realistic, taking into account the overall condition and character of the region including its problems of economic under-development. An effective regional arrangement requires high levels of mutual understanding between governments. It was suggested that such understanding could be fostered, at least during these early stages, by the development of sub-regional machinery.

On the related issue of promoting intra-regional cooperation, **Professor Yamazaki** presented a proposal for the establishment of regional or sub-regional machinery for the processing and dissemination of human rights information. This, he explained, could be the first step towards developing a forum within which intra-regional cooperation on human rights issues could be fostered. Professor Yamazaki suggested that the feasability of this proposal could be examined by way of a research project undertaken by the United Nations University.

The promotion of cooperation on human rights issues *between* regions was also examined. Ambassador Fan reiterated earlier comments that each UN-defined region was able to benefit from the knowledge and experience of the others. He urged the states of Asia-Pacific to establish and maintain contacts with others and suggested that any regional machinery established in the Asia-Pacific, could be a useful vehicle for facilitating productive exchanges.

Discussion:

The possibility of setting up human rights machinery on a regional level generated a high level of positive discussion with many delegations expressing their support for the idea. It was generally agreed that plans in this regard should not be too ambitious and should take into account a number of factors including the geograhical complexity, diversity and vastness of the countries which form the region as well as their different historical background and levels of political stability, economic prosperity and social development. At the same time, similarities should not be ignored and there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the notion that states seek commonality while admitting diversity and difference.

While a number of participantsdelegations advanced specific proposals, the majority appeared to be staisfied with a general expression of willingness to work towards the development of human rights machinery at the regional or sub-regional level. Such a mechanism would not attempt to duplicate the human rights systems which have been set up in other regions of the world. Instead, delegates agreed that human rights could best be promoted through the establishment of a forum for exchange of experiences and information. Such a forum could well prove to be the first step in an on-going process to institutionalise human rights protection at the regional level.

WORKSHOP TOPIC 5:
WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS: REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Objective:

By resolution 45/155 of December 1990, the General Assembly decided to convene a World Conference on Human Rights which is scheduled to take place in Vienna, Austria, from 14-25 June 1992. The World Conference will provide an opportunity for the international community to review progress in the field of human rights; to identify obstacles to the full realisation of these rights and ways in which these may be overcome; to examine the relationship between development and human rights; to evaluate the effectiveness of United Nations activities and mechanisms and finally, to formulate recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations in the field of human rights.

As part of the preparatory process of the World conference, regional meetings have been organised to take place in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The first two of these meetings have already been convened in Tunisia and Costa Rica respectively. The Regional Meeting for Asia is scheduled for March 1993 in Bangkok. By including the topic of the World Conference on the agenda of the Workshop, it was hoped that the groundwork for this meeting could be laid down and that some preliminary understanding on the concerns and expectations of the Asian states could be reached during the Workshop sessions devoted to this topic.

Presentations:

An explanation of the history of the World Conference, its objectives and the preparatory process to date was provided by **Mr Atchebro** of the Centre for Human Rights. In his brief presentation on the topic, **Ambassador Fan** identified the achievements of the United Nations with regard to human rights and highlighted several of the problems facing the UN in this field. He stressed the importance of the preparatory meeting

for Asian States in contributing to a positive achievement of the World Conference. **Mr Shahi** echoed these remarks while emphasising several specific issues which should be addressed at the Conference including the question of development and human rights; the problem of funding of human rights treaty bodies; and the issue of mass violations.

According to **Mr Burdekin**, the World Conference will be a unique forum within which States may discuss various questions surrounding the issues of national human rights institutions and regional human rights arrangements. He emphasised the indivisibility of all rights and urged participants to view the World Conference as an opportunity to identify and attempt to deal with the major human rights problems now facing the world community. Mr Burdekin pointed out that current discussions about reforming the United Nations should not be seperated from the more specific question about the role of the Organisation in promoting and protecting human rights. The fact that human rights is now entering the mainstream of political debate indicates that this is both necessary and possible.

Ms Mulgan voiced her support for including national institutions in discussions surrounding the World Conference. She stressed the importance of developing forums of communication between states involved in the establishment or strengthening of national institutions. The United Nations Centre for Human Rights should also be included given its important role in the provision of advisory services and technical assistance in the field of human rights.

Discussion:

Several main themes emerged from the discussion period which followed the presentations on this topic. A number of delegations expressed their approval of including, as a principle objective of the Conference, the issue of the relationship between democracy, development and the realisation of all human rights. Specific human rights problems which should, according to a number of participants, be discussed in Vienna included terrorism, poverty and environmental degredation.

A widespread consensus emerged during the discussions that the World Conference will be most useful if it is viewed as an opportunity to discuss, in a non-confrontational way, the ways in which the international community can work together towards universal realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Open, frank dialogue will only be possible if the World Conference is approached in a spirit of cooperation.

One final matter raise by a number of participants concerned the position of the Centre for Human Rights. It was agreed that the Centre will require considerable

strengthening, particularly with respect to resources, if its important role in protection and promotion of human rights is to continue. Particular attention should be paid to enhancing the efficiency and capacity of the Centre with regard to its provision of advisory services and technical assistance in the field of human rights. States attending the World Conference should consider these issues carefully, particularly in view of the importance of developing a coherent strategy for promoting universal acceptance of human rights.

****

CLOSING SESSION

The closing session was presided over by Mr Wiryono who, in his capacity of Co-Chairman of the Workshop, delivered concluding remarks summing up the achievements of the Workshop and reflecting the principle points of agreement reached between participants. These remarks are reproduced in full at the begining of this report. Mr Wiryono's remarks were followed by statements from several delegations and experts expressing their agreement with the Chairman and their thanks to those involved in the organisation of the Workshop.

ANNEX 1

ASIA-PACIFIC WORKSHOP ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

JAKARTA, INDONESIA
26-28 JANUARY, 1993

PROGRAMME

TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 1993

MORNING

7:30 - 8:30	Registration of participants, distribution of documents
8:45	Departure from Hotel to the State Palace
10:00 - 12:00	Opening ceremony (at the Presidential Palace)

- Introductory address by H.E. Mr. A. Alatas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia
- Statement of Mr. A. Blanca, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights
- Speech by H.E. Mr. Soeharto, President of the Republic of Indonesia

AFTERNOON

14:30 - 16:00 <u>Working Session I</u>

Introductory overview of international norms and standards in the field of human rights

< Speakers >
Mr. Pocar, Mr. Shahi
Discussion

16:00 - 16:15 Break

16:15 - 17:45 <u>Working Session II</u>

National implementation of international human rights standards

< Speakers >
Mr. Pocar, Mr. Shahi
Mr. Wirajuda
Discussion

WEDNESDAY 27 JANUARY 1993

MORNING

08:30 - 10:30	Working Session III Activities of national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights Issues of jurisdiction and competence: which rights to protect and how ? < Speakers > Ms. Mulgan, Mr. Monteiro, Mr. Burdekin *Discussion*
10:30 - 11:00	Break
11:00 - 13:00	Working Session IV Relations between national institutions and the State: issues of autonomy and independence; relations between national institutions and other partners < Speakers > Mr. Burdekin, Mr. Monteiro, Ms. Mulgan *Discussion*

AFTERNOON

15:00 - 16:30	Working Session V What makes an effective national institution for protection and promotion of human rights? < Speakers > Mr. Monteiro, Ms. Mulgan, Mr. Burdekin *Discussion*
16:30 - 16:45	Break
16:45 - 18:15	Working Session VI On the possibility of establishing regional human rights machinery: problems and prospects < Speakers > Mr. Pocar, Mr. Fan, Mr. Yamazaki Mr.Lubis *Discussion*

THURSDAY 28 JANUARY 1993

MORNING

08:30 - 11:00	Working Session VII Laying the groundwork: ways and means of facilitating inter/intra-regional cooperation in the field of human rights < Speakers > Mr. Fan, Mr. Yamazaki *Discussion*
11:00 - 11:30	Break
11:30 - 13:30	Working Session VIII World Conference on Human Rights: review and assessment of progress made in the field of human rights < Speakers > Mr. Fan, Mr. Shahi Mr. Burdekin, Ms. Mulgan UN Centre for Human Rights *Discussion*

AFTERNOON

16:00 - 17:00	Closing of the Workshop

****

ANNEX 2

LIST OF EXPERTS

Mr Brian Burdekin
Federal Human Rights Commissioner
Australia

Ambassador Fan Guoxiang
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
People's Republic of China

Dr T. Mulya Lubis
Director, Institute of Human Rights Studies,
Indonesia

Mr. N.C. Monteiro
Commissioner of the Philippine
Commission on Human Rights
Philippines

Ms. Margaret Mulgan
Human Rights Commissioner
New Zealand

Mr. Fausto Pocar
Chairman, Human Rights Committee; Vice-President,
University of Milan (Italy)
Italy

Mr Agha Shahi
former Chairman of the Committee on the
Elimination of Racial Discrimination
University Professor, Islamabad
Pakistan

Mr. Hassan Wirayuda
Minister Counsellor
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia
to the United Nations, Geneva

Prof. Koji Yamazaki
Professor of Law,
University of Kagawa, Japan

ANNEX 3

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CO-CHAIRMEN

Mr Antoine Blanca
Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights
United Nations Office at Geneva

Mr S. Wiryono
Director-General for Political Affairs
Department of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Indonesia

GOVERNMENT

1. AFGHANISTAN

Dr. Hakim UTMAN
Member of UN Affairs
Department and Desk Officer
for Human Rights
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2. AUSTRALIA

Mr. Tony Hely
Minister
Australian Embassy, Jakarta

Dr. Lee KERR
Human Rights Section
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Mr. Peter Thomson
Legal Adviser
Human Rights Branch
Attorney-General's Department

Mr. Allaster Cox
First Secretary
Australian Embassy, Jakarta

3. BANGLADESH

Mr. M. Safiullah
Second Secretary
Embassy of Bangladesh, Jakarta

4. BHUTAN

Mr. Kinga SINGYE
Assistant Director
Policy and Planning Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

5. BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Mr. Pengiran Haji SALEHUDDIN
Acting Director
Department of Political Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

6. CAMBODIA

Mr Im SETHY
Ministerial Adviser
Phnom Phen

7. CHINA

Mr. Yongjian JIN
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of the People's
Republic of China in Geneva

Mr. Xinsheng LIU
Second Secretary
Department of International Organizations
Foreign Ministry

8. FIJI

Mr. Nairendra NAND
State Solicitor
Solicitor General's Office
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and
Civil Aviation

9. INDIA

Mr. Ajai MALHOTRA
Director (UNP)
International Organizations Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

10. INDONESIA

Mr. S. Wiryono
(Co-Chairman of the Workshop)
Director General for Political Affairs
Department of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Hadi Wayarabi
Director for International Organization
Deparment of Foreign Affairs

Prof. Dr. Hamid A.S. Attamimi
Deputy Secretary Cabinet

Dr. Saafroedin Bahar
Senior Official of State Secretariat

Prof. Dr. Baharuddin Lopa, SH.
Director General for Corrections

Prof. Dr. Satjipto Rahardjo, SH
Lecturer at University of Diponegoro

Prof. Dr. Ismail Suny, SH, LLM
Lecturer at University of Indonesia

Prof. Miriam Budiardjo, SH
Lecturer at University of Indonesia

Dr. Hassan Wirajuda
Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Republic
Indonesia to the United Nations, Geneva

Dr. T. Mulya Lubis
Director, Institute of Human Rights Studies, Jakarta

11. IRAN

Mr. Mohammad Ali MOTTAGHI-NEJAD
Director Deputy of the Human Rights
Social and International Affairs
Department in the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs

Mr. Mahmood KHANI
Human Rights Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Mahmoud Esmaeil-Nia
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, jakarta

12. **JAPAN**

Mr. Yutaka YOSHIZAWA
Director
Human Rights & Refugees Division
United Nations Bureau
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Yukio TAKASU
Minister
Embassy of Japan in Jakarta

Mr. Yasushi TAKASE
First Secretary
Embassy of Japan in Jakarta

13. **DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

Mr. Lim Yong CHOL
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

14. **REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

Mr. Chong-Hoon KIM
Deputy Director
United Nations Division II
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Woong-Ki KIM
Deputy Director
Human Rights Division
Ministry of Justice

15. **LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**

Mrs. Khanthalasy SAYAVONGSONE
Department of International Organizations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Oukham Sengkeomixay
Embassy of Laos, Jakarta

16. **MALDIVES**

Mr. Abdulla SHAHID
Deputy Director, International Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

17. **MALAYSIA**

Mr. Radzi b. Abdul Rahman
International Organizations Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

18. **MONGOLIA**

Mr. Ts. SUHBAATAR
Director
Department of the Treaty and
Legal Affairs
Ministry of External Affairs

19. **MYANMAR**

Mr. U Nyi Nyi Than
Deputy Director-General
Political Department
Ministry of Foreign affairs

20. **NEPAL**

Mr. Hari SHARMA
Senior Official
Prime Minister's Secretariat

21. **NEW ZEALAND**

Mr. David KERSEY
Counsellor
Embassy of New Zealand in Jakarta

22. **PAKISTAN**

Mr. Mohammed Abdul Mateen KHAN
Director (UN)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

23. **PAPAU NEW GUINEA**

Mr. Ere KARIKO
Public Solicitor

24. PHILIPPINES

Ms. Cecila B. REBONG
Office of UNIO
Department of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Catalino R. Dilem Jr.
First Secretary
Embassy of Philippines, Jakarta

25. SINGAPORE

Mr. Bilahari KAUSIKAN
Director
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Aileen TAN Ai Lin
Counter Officer
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

26. SRI LANKA

Ms. Aruni Y. DEWARAJA
Second Secretary
Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka
to the United Nations Office at Geneva

27. THAILAND

Mr. Sirisak TIYAPAN
Provincial Chief
Public Prosecutor for Central Administration
Office of the Attorney General
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Warute SETSUWAN
First Secretary
Department of International Organizations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Anchalee Saifah
First Secretary
Royal Thai Embassy, Jakarta

28. SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Mrs. Hoang Bich LIEN
Expert du Département des Organisations
Internationales
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères

OBSERVERS

1. **Embassy of Algeria**

   Mr Mohammed Derhab
   Charge d'Affaires

2. **Embassy of Austria**

   H.E. Dr Herbert Kroll
   Ambassador

   Dr Andreas List
   Counsellor

3. **Embassy of Canada**

   Mr Ed Whitcomb
   Counsellor

   Mr Stanley Moore
   Counsellor

   Mr Colin Stewart
   Third Secretary

4. **Embassy of Finland**

   Mr Jarno Syrjala
   Second Secretary

5. **Embassy of France**

   Mr Jean Francois Casabone-Massonnane
   First Secretary

6. **Embassy of Germany**

   Dr Andreas Zimmer

7. **Embassy of the Netherlands**

   Mr Gerald Kramer
   Charge d'Affaires

   Mr Edward Hoeks
   Counsellor

8. **Embassy of Spain**

H.E. Mr Leopoldo Stamph
Ambassador

Mr Manuel Montobbio
Deputy Head of Mission

9. **Embassy of the United Kingdom**

Mr Ian Donaldson
Second Secretary

10. **Embassy of the United States of America**

Mr John Koenig
Second Secretary

UNITED NATIONS

11. **UNTAC**

Mr Williams
Deputy Director of Human Rights

12. **UNDP**

Mr C. Jan Kemp
Resident Representative, Indonesia

13. **UNHCR**

Ms Annika Linden
Legal Officer, Tanjung Pinang, Indonesia

14. **UNESCO**

Mr Jurgen Hillig
Director

Mr Narcisse Khoeun
Administrative and Programme Officer

Ms Marie Spaey
Associate Expert for Culture

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

15. ASEAN Secretariat

Mr Pichai Chuensuksawadi
Assistant director, External Relations

16. European Communities

Mr Michael Drury
Minister Counsellor

INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

International Committee of the Red Cross

Mr Pierre Pont
Director, Jakarta Office

Mr Christophe Zwinarzki
Director, Hongkong Office

18. Amnesty International

Dr Geoffrey Robinson
Researcher

LIST OF INDONESIAN OBSERVERS

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

1.	A.A.G. Oke Djelantik	International Forum Indonesia
2.	Ali Thoyib	Institution of Constitutional Conciousness Development
3.	Bugi Soepeno, S.H.	Indonesian Lawyer
4.	Djokopitoyo, S.H.	Indonesian Labour Foundation
5.	Hardi, S.H.	International Forum Indonesia
6.	Harry Tjan Silalahi	Centre for Strategic of International Studies
7.	Ida Bagus Putra	Indonesian Hinduism Representative
8.	J. Kristiadi	Centre for Strategic of International Studies
9.	Johan B.P. Maramis	ASEAN Inter Parliamentary Organization
10.	Jusuf Wanandi	Centre for Strategic of International Studies
11.	Kuraesin Kumhadi	Indonesian Women Corps
12.	Linda E.A. Lasut	ASEAN Inter Parliamentary Organization
13.	Lukman Harun	Moslem Solidarity Committee
14.	Marzuki Achmad	Indonesian Labour Union
15.	Matheus Nalle	Indonesian Labour Union
16.	Muhamad Soedjono	Indonesian Moslem Assembly
17.	Mulyadi Wahyono	Indonesian Budhism Representative
18.	Nani Yamin	LKBHIUWK
19.	Rambun Tjajo	Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation
20.	Soebijakto Prawirasoebrata	Institution for Indonesian Strategic Studies
21.	Sutrisno Kusumohadi	Indonesian Red Cross
22.	T.K. Adhyatman	Adam Malik Foundation
23.	Tubagus Haryono	Indonesian National Youth Committee
24.	Valentine Kartosiswoyo	KWI
25.	Victor I. Tanja	International Forum Indonesia

INDIVIDUALS

1.	Abu Hartono	Members of Parliament
2.	Achdari	Government Official
3.	Achmad Thahir	Department of Foreign Affairs
4.	Adian Silalahi	Department of Foreign Affairs
5.	Adriana Sri Ujianti	Department of Man Power
6.	A. Frans Tumiwa	Indonesian Churches Association
7.	Ahmed Bey Sofwan	Government Official
8.	Agus Tardmizi	Department of Foreign Affairs
9.	Albert Hasibuan	Members of Parliament
10.	Ali Hardi Kiaidemak	Members of Parliament
11.	Aminah	Lawyer
12.	Amin Rianom	Department of Foreign Affairs
13.	Andi Mattalatta	Members of Parliament
14.	Andi M. Asrun	Indonesia University
15.	Andre Hardjana	Scientist
16.	Anggit Hernowo	RCTI, Private Television
17.	Ani S. Santhoso	Secretary, Minister for the Role of Women
18.	Baharudin Lopa	Deparment of Justice
19.	Bambang sulistomo	Krisnadwipayana University
20.	Bambang Sutisna	Government Official
21.	Ben Mang Reng Say	Supreme Advisory Council
22.	Budiman Darmosusanto	Deparment of Foreign Affairs
23.	Dalindra Aman	Department of Foreign Affairs
24.	Djamaris B. Sulaiman	Department of Foreign Affairs
25.	Djonsarei	Department of Home Affairs
26.	Djupri	Member of Parliament
27.	Dwie Riawenny S.	Member of Parliament
28.	Edhimurti Sunoko	Department of Foreign Affairs
29.	Fx. Lopez da Cruz	Supreme Advisory Council
30.	Gatot Tjahyono	Department of Foreign Affairs
31.	H. Awang Farouk	Member of Parliament
32.	Harry Affendie	Ministry of Coordinator for Political and Security Affairs
33.	Hasan Abduljalil	Ministry of Coordinator for Political and Security Affairs
34.	Hasnan Habib	Roving Ambassador
35.	Ishak Latuconsina	Members of Parliament
36.	I.G.N.K. Sumantera	Department of Foreign Affairs
37.	Ildrem Pulungan	Department of Justice
38.	Iris Indra Murti	Members of Parliament
39.	Jubaidi Pribadi	Pelita, Daily News
40.	Marcel Beding	Members of Parliament
41.	Marzuki Darusman	Members of Parliament
42.	Mochtar Kusumaatmadja	Supreme Advisory Council
43.	Moh. Widodo Gondowardojo	Governement Official
44.	M. Nurdin	Governemnt Official
45.	Muradi Yuti, S.H.	Department of Home Affairs
46.	Muladi	Diponegoro University
47.	Nurhadi Purwosaputro	Government Official

48.	Nursivin	Daily News
49.	Otje Soedioto	Berita Yudha, Daily News
50.	Retno Bintari	KOMPAS, Daily News
51.	Ria R. Aritonang	Members of Parliament
52.	Riris Irawati	ANTARA, Indonesian News Agency
53.	Satjipto Rahardjo	Diponegoro University
54.	Soebrata	Director General, Ministry of Information
55.	Soekadari Honggowongso	Ministry of Coordinator for Political and Security Affairs
56.	Soemitro	Ministry of Coordinator for Political Ad Security Affairs
57.	Soedjati Djiwandono	Suara Karya, Daily News
58.	Syaiful B	
59.	S. Leo Batubara	
60.	Sunaryati H	Government Official, Law of Development Board
61.	Syamsoe Soegito	NDIO
62.	Susanto Soetoyo	Department of Foreign Affairs
63.	Taheri Noor	Members of Parliament
64.	Taufiqulhadi	Media Indonesia, Daily News
65.	Tj. Tarigan Siberu	Members of Parliament
66.	Tati S. Darsoyo	Members of Parliament
67.	Theo Sambuaga	Members of Parliament
68.	Umar Hussein	National Defence and Security Council
69.	Mr. Abdul H Nusantara	Indonesian Legal Foundation

UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr Antoine Blanca
Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights
United Nations Office at Geneva

Mr J.L.Gomez del Prado
Officer-in-Charge
Advisory Services, Technical Assistance
and Information Branch

Ms Anne Gallagher
Advisory Services, Technical Assistance
and Information Branch

Mr Daniel Achebro
Legislation and Prevention of Discrimination Branch

Ms Sultana Maideen
Advisory Services, Technical Assistance
and Information Branch

****

ANNEX 4

OPENING ADDRESS BY MR ANTOINE BLANCA, UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC WORKSHOP ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

JAKARTA, INDONESIA
26-28 JANUARY 1993

Your Excellency President Soeharto, Your Excellency Mr. Alatas, Minister of Foreign Affairs., Your Excellencies, Government Officials, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, distinguished participants and speakers, ladies and gentlemen. It is for me a great privilege and a real pleasure to be here in Jakarta at the opening of the Second Asia-Pacific Conference on Human Rights Issues. It is my firm conviction that the holding of this Workshop represents an important milestone in the struggle for univeral recognition of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This Workshop has been organised by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in the context of its programme of advisory services and technical assistance. On behalf of the Centre I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who have worked to make this event possible. To you Mr. President and to the people of Indonesia my most profound thanks and appreciation for the gracious reception, tremendous welcome and warm hospitality.

Your Excellencies, ladies and Gentlemen,

Before addressing the major themes of this Workshop, I take this occassion to speak briefly about the work of the United Nations in the field of human rights. In doing so, I hope to give you a general picture of the various means by which the Organization can assist governments and others committed to advancing human rights at the national, regional and international levels.

One of the first major achievements of the United Nations in pursuit of its human rights mandate, was the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly in 1948. The Assembly proclaimed the Declaration to be " a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations". It is now more than forty years since the adoption of the Declaration and today there exists a comprehensive body of international principles and standards touching upon almost every conceivable area of human activity.

Of course legislation cannot, of itself, constitute a sound basis for protection. There can be no doubt that without effective structures for monitoring compliance, human rights law will amount to nothing more than grand rhetoric. The

principles and standards contained in the various human rights instruments have been fortified by the establishment of a complex network of implementation machinery. This network includes the Commission on Human Rights and the various human rights committees set up under the major international instruments. The United Nations is fully committed to strengthening and enhancing this machinery. Nevertheless, we cannot undertake such a task alone. A genuine commitment on the part of governments to participate fully in the implementation process is a prerequisite for its effective operation. In addition, it should be recognized that international implementation must be complemented by national application of those human rights standards which have been agreed upon by the world community. These are crucial issues and deserve the careful attention of all those present over the next few days.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

There is another element to our work: - the difficult but essential task of attempting to prevent violations before they occur. Information and education are perhaps our most valuable tools in this respect. All groups and all peoples must be informed of the rights to which they are entitled and of the mechanisms which exist to enforce these rights. Those who are ignorant of their human rights will not, indeed cannot, exercise these rights.

A comprehensive approach to human rights education demands that particular attention be given to those groups which are in a unique position to affect the human rights of others. While retaining its commitment to informing the general public about human rights, the Centre for Human Rights places great emphasis on specialist education. We are currently involved in a large number of training activities and programmes for police, teachers, members of the judiciary, parliamentarians and government officials.

The Centre for Human Rights also provides other forms of assistance to governments who wish to strengthen their national institutions and infrastructures for the purpose of improving protection and promotion on human rights. Over the years we have developed and refined a wide range of mechanisms for achieving this goal. An extensive fellowship programme is conducted each year, enabling professionals working in key areas to gain first hand experience of the international human rights system. I have already mentioned training courses which are held at both the national and the regional level and which are designed to equip specialized groups with the knowledge required to ensure that human rights are protected and promoted. These courses will soon be supplemented by a series of training manuals designed to ensure that the education process continues after formal instruction is completed.

Other vehicles for education include seminars and workshops such as the one being opened today. These gatherings

provide an excellent opportunity for an exchange of views on a wide range of human rights problems and possible solutions. Over 70 regional and international seminars have been organized under the Advisory Services and Technical Assistance Programme since its inception - bringing together state officials and representatives of various governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to consider issues as diverse as apartheid, migrant workers and traditional practices affecting the health of women and children.

The Centre also provides the advisory services of experts to governments in a number of important areas including election procedure, legislative and constitutional drafting and the development of effective and accesible legal systems. Such assistance is becoming increasingly significant in this era of change and transition.

Officials of the Centre for Human Rights are here to answer any questions you may have about the programmes I have mentioned. I encourage each of the governments represented here to examine your own needs and expertise in this area and to work with the Centre in its efforts to develop practical and effective education and training programmes.

A voluntary fund for advisory services and technical assistance in the field of human rights provides additional financial support for practical works directed towards the implementation of international human rights instruments developed by the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations. Of course, because of the fact that requests for assistance are growing in both number and complexity, the Centre does not have the resources to meet all of these requests and therefore we need the active support of member states. Without such support, the Centre's efforts in this regard will remain inadequate.

It would be seriously remiss of me to speak of the work of the United Nations in the field of human rights without making mention of the various non-governmental organizations which have been established to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms. These organizations have played a seminal role in the history of the United Nations. Their faith and commitment helped to give shape to the Charter and they have, over the years, consistently provided stimulus and inspiration for both the planning and implementation of United Nations programmes and activities,. Non-governmental organizations, by their very nature, have a freedom of expression, a flexibility of action and a liberty of movement which enable them to complement our role in the protection and promotion of human rights. They deserve our support and encouragement. I welcome their presence here today. I welcome in particular the dynamism and commitment of Indonesian non-governmental organizations active in the field of human rights, and assure them that we are fully aware of the national human rights situation. The United Nations is committed to working towards resolving these issues in close

consultation with the Indonesian authorities.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen.

I now wish to move to the specifics of our task at hand. As I explained at the beginning of my address, this event has been organized under the United Nations Programme of Advisory Services and Technical Assistance. It has been convened in order to facilitate discussion on several issues which are widely considered to be crucial to promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. I would like to briefly comment on each of these.

Mention has already been made of the importance of dealing with human rights issues before they give rise to violations. In many instances, this preventive approach requires recognition of the crucial role played by national governments in the realization of human rights. Human rights involve relationships among individuals and between individuals and the state. Therefore, the practical task of protecting and promoting human rights is one for which each state must inevitably be responsible. Rights can be best protected at the national level through adequate legislation, an independent judiciary, the enactment and enforcement of individual safeguards and remedies and the establishment of democratic structures. In recognition of these important truths, this Workshop will be addressing, in some detail, issues concerning the creation and development of national institutions for protection and promotion of human rights.

Official human rights institutions have been set up by a large number of countries in recent years. Many nations, including several in the Asia-Pacific region are now taking the first steps towards establishing such bodies. This trend is a positive one - a clear illustration of the willingness of certain States to guarantee real and effective protection of the human rights of their citizens. Constructive dialogue which leads to the strengthening of such institutions can only enhance the effectiveness of the international system for protection and promotion of human rights.

Both national and international human rights mechanisms are in a position to benefit from the collaboration and support which can be provided by regional infrastructures and it is with such regional arrangements that the second major theme of this workshop is concerned. Asia-Pacific is currently the only United Nations-defined region without a specific human rights treaty and without some form of region-wide human rights mechanism. The absence of such arrangements has been raised in a number of UN bodies including the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights. It is hoped that this gathering will prove an appropriate forum for the Asia-Pacific nations to identify ways in which obstacles to the establishment of a regional system for protection and promotion of human rights could be overcome.

The third and final major theme of this gathering concerns the World Conference for Human Rights which is scheduled to take place in Vienna in June of this year. I do not need to remind you of the importance of this event, It is twenty-five years since the international community convened to discuss human rights at this level. The world we are living in today is now a different place - one frought with new, formidable dangers and promising new exciting possibilities. The objectives of the World conference are:

- to review and assess progress made in the field of human rights since the adoption of the Univeral Declaration in 1948,

- to identify obstacles and ways in which they may be overcome;

- to examine the link between development and the enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights;

- to examine ways to improve the implementation of human rights standards and instruments;

- to evaluate the efeectiveness of United Nations methods and mechanisms;

- to recommend ways to ensure adequate financial and other resources for UN human rights activities

This event is our chance to take stock of what has been achieved thus far. It is a chance for the international community to engage in constructive dialogue about the future of our global society. It is a chance to make a difference. The political importance of the Asia-Pacific region is beyond dispute and the countries represented here today are, collectively, in a unique position to affect the outcome of the World Conference. I urge you to think carefully, to discharge this responsiblity wisely and in doing so, to demonstrate to the international community, the commitment and leadership of which you are so capable.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

It would be both foolish and short-sighted of us to close our eyes to the fact that human rights violations are occuring with frightening regularity. Indeed, not a day passes without reports reaching us in Geneva of torture, of disappearances, of summary arrests and executions, of killing of unarmed demonstrators, of gross mistreatment of ethnic groups. Vulnerable populations including migrant workers, refugees, indigenous peoples and members of cultural and religious minorities are increasingly the object of violent attack.

However, while such events remain a source of serious concern to us all, some other political developments have

become a source of hope. There is now widespread recognition of the fact that human rights are the very substance of life, the foundation of peace and security as well as of economic prosperity at both the national and the international levels. In all corners of the earth we are witnessing unprecedented assertions of entitlement to fundamental human rights. These calls cannot be ignored. Today, perhaps more so than at any time in the past, the world community is in a position to significantly strengthen the international human rights system. Together we must ensure that this opportunity to effect real and lasting change is not wasted.

As Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, let me take this opportunity to personally assure each of you of my commitment to the human rights work of the governments and organizations represented here and to confirm the United Nations' eagerness to cooperate with you for the fulfillment of our common objectives. It is my sincere hope that the presentations and discussions of the next few days will provide a solid foundation upon which future efforts to promote human rights in the Asia-Pacific region will be built. A human rights meeting such as this one can only be viewed as productive and useful if it results in an improvement in the everyday human rights of the people.

Finally, allow me to express my thanks to the distinguished expert speakers who, despite busy schedules, have agreed to share with us their knowledge and experience. I also thank the representatives of governments from the Asia-Pacific region who are present here as well as the representatives of UN bodies and agencies and non-governmental organisations active in the field of human rights.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

Once again, I welcome you to the Asia-Pacific Workshop on Human Rights Issues. I urge you participate actively, to discuss frankly and to take full advantage of the knowledge and expertise which is gathered here. By doing so, you will be going a long way towards ensuring the success of this important endeavour.

Thank you for your attention.

****